

November 14, 2016

Bureau of Land Management  
Eastern States Office  
20 M Street, Suite 950  
Washington, D.C. 2003

Fax: (202) 912-7798  
(202) 912-7710

Attn: BLM State Director: Karen Mouritsen  
Associate State Director: Barbara Eggers

We, the below signed members of the Antioch College community are writing in **opposition to the proposed auction/leasing of federal mineral rights located beneath Wayne National Forest (WNF)** for potential oil and gas development, including in particular, hydraulic fracturing and storage wells (Class II-EIC) on/near the Ohio River Basin and adjacent to a National Wildlife Refuge. These at-risk forest lands near our state's primary water source are neither protected by the EPA nor the Clean Water Act--should mineral rights be sold--because of the "*Halliburton Loophole*" devised by the Bush/Cheney "*Energy Policy Act of 2005*" in direct conflict of interest with the citizens of the United States in favor of private, for-profit fossil fuel industry profiteers lead by Halliburton CEO, Dick Cheney. Halliburton is the largest fracking industry in the world.

The Bureau of Land Management's own **Environmental Assessment (EA)** admits the **dangerous repercussions of oil and gas development on WNF land**, citing risks of "*induced seismicity,*" "*chemical spills,*" and "*potential exposure to contamination that may cause health conditions in sensitive or susceptible populations,*" to quote just a few. The statement that "disproportionate adverse effects" on low-income populations are not anticipated can only be taken as an admission that overall adverse effect *are* expected. The Environmental Assessment, however, couches these warnings in deceptively reassuring reminders that the initial act of leasing the land in question would not have any immediate impacts, as if a lease could lead to any other end than oil and gas development in WNF. **The document is written with obvious intent to dissemble and conceal the true impacts of the proposed development.**

There is ample evidence, both scientific and historical, of the detrimental effects of fracking on communities and the environment. It is well-documented in the scientific literature that the process of fracking entails a variety of harmful consequences, and one need only look as far as **Morgan County, OH** to see what a risky business fracking can be: just two years ago, 100

barrels of toxic fracking lubrication fluid leaked into a nearby stream, prompting local evacuations and potentially contaminating all the water downstream of that point, with possible ramifications for marine life farther down the line. And in Noble County, later that same year, a worker was killed in an explosion while working on a pump that transported fracking fluid. In Jackson County, Dusty and Tamera Hagy have sued multiple companies for illegal natural-gas drilling on their property, which contaminated their drinking water and caused health complications and ultimately an evacuation of their home.

The list goes on: the map of fracking-related disasters is crowded, and it would be eminently short-sighted to risk adding Ohio's sole national forest to the list of affected sites.

It seems clear that the negative consequences of fracking in Wayne National Forest far outweigh any short-term economic benefits for the state and federal governments, and we desperately urge you to **STOP** the mineral rights lease auction of the Wayne National Forest lands and commit to protecting the the water/land/air that *must* support us all in for generations.

Respectfully submitted,

On behalf of concerned Ohio citizens of Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio,

Leah Newton, student

Emma Metty, student

Jennifer Ruud, student

Greta Treistman, student

Mari K. Smith, student

Ruth Lane, student

Kori Whittaker, student

Jonna Johnson, The Arthur Morgan Institute for Community Solutions

Emily Steinmetz, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Beth Bridgeman, Instructor of Cooperative Education

Jennifer Wenker, Director of Herndon Gallery and Public Health RN

Dennie Eagleson, Resident Scholar, Antioch College

Sharon Flicker, Associate Professor of Psychology

Corine Tachtiris, Assistant Professor of Literature

Luisa Bieri Rios, Instructor of Cooperative Education

Paige Babb, Administrative Assistant

Reggie Stratton, Director of Physical Plant

Louise Smith, Associate Professor of Performance

Sylvia Newman, Admission Counselor and Campus Visit Coordinator

Matt Green, Advancement Coordinator

**Kelly Hudson, Laboratory Technician**

**Scott Sanders, Archivist**

**Tom Clevenger, Assistant Director, Glen Helen Ecology Institute**

**Dianne Jordan, Accounts Payable, Manager**